

I am here once again representing my ranking member on the Committee on Agriculture, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) as he testifies before the Committee on Rules, attempting to secure placement of the legislation he has offered in support of disaster assistance to farmers.

To reveal the state of play here, the Senate has passed a \$3 billion disaster bill to help farmers in light of the disastrous losses that they have suffered, not just from hurricanes, but we have seen it all, a big swath of losses due to drought. In North Dakota, we have even had disaster losses of a significant magnitude due to early frost, frost coming on August 19.

There are some in the House discussing a nod to disaster assistance to the tune of \$500 million, maybe up to close to \$1 billion. This does not come close to addressing the needs of farmers across this country.

Mr. Speaker, a \$3 billion bill passed by the Senate is a much more realistic and substantive response, and I hope that the House is given the opportunity by the Committee on Rules, pursuant to the testimony of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) right now, to consider the full disaster package, the \$3 billion disaster package.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to production agriculture, we have macro statistics and we have micro circumstances. The macro statistics may reveal that this is just another year in production agriculture, but we know from the hurricanes in the State of Florida that it has been anything but a normal year in terms of production agriculture.

If we take you over to the Great Plains States, we will show you a drought that is beginning to rival what they saw in the Great Depression, the "Dirty 30s," reservoirs drying up, year after year of failed production. Up in North Dakota, and I will tell my colleagues that I am a farm retailer's kid, I have been close to farming and agriculture all of my life, I have never seen a frost on August 19 do such harm to the production that we were experiencing.

This is why this disaster bill is so critically important, and that is why I wish the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) well in his testimony before the House Committee on Rules.

I will say of his statement on behalf of this bill, wholehearted support, I appreciate very much the chairman's efforts in moving this bill forward, and I will go on to read the statement of the gentleman from Texas (Ranking Member STENHOLM) on behalf of H. Res. 481.

"Mr. Speaker, I express my wholehearted support for H. Res. 481 which recognizes the establishment of the Hunters for the Hungry programs across the United States and the vital contributions these programs make in the ongoing effort to decrease hunger and help feed those in need.

"Hunters for the Hungry programs are volunteer and cooperative efforts

among hunters, sportsmen's associations, meat processors, State meat inspectors, and hunger relief organizations to help feed those in need.

"These programs are not only simple, but also practical. The hunters provide the game meat, which is taken to processors who cut, wrap, and freeze it. The meat is then distributed through agencies such as food banks and other non-profit organizations which feed the needy.

"In my home State of Texas," again speaking on behalf of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), "the Texas Association of Community Action Agencies, Inc., with funding from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, has worked with the hunters' program for over 10 years. Since 1991, the Hunters for the Hungry program in Texas has distributed over 480,000 pounds of venison to the needy in Texas.

"Hunters for the Hungry programs provide an excellent example of community service in action. The intention of this resolution is more than just to congratulate those who participate in these programs for a job well done. The resolution also serves to bring attention, encourage participation, and promote additional constructive ideas for addressing the problem of hunger in the United States."

Mr. Speaker, seeing no further requests for time, I yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, at this time it is my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY), the chief sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), as well as the ranking member, for bringing this resolution to the floor today.

On December 8, 2003, I introduced House Resolution 481 to bring attention to an often-overlooked group of hunters and meat processors who help feed thousands of homeless and hungry people each year. It was my intention to draft a resolution that would praise Hunters for the Hungry programs across our country in many States, all States, and encourage new and innovative ways of addressing our Nation's hunger problem.

Although these organizations have various names, depending on the State or region of the country, Hunters for the Hungry organizations show the humanitarian and kind-hearted spirit of our Nation's hunting community. Hunters for the Hungry programs are volunteer and cooperative efforts among hunters, sportsmen's associations, meat processors, State meat inspectors, and hunger relief organizations. All of these groups work together to help feed those in need.

Over the past 3 years, such programs have brought hundreds of thousands of

pounds of excess venison to homeless shelters, to soup kitchens and food banks, feeding thousands of needy people. Each year, donations have multiplied and programs now find themselves overflowing with thousands of pounds of meat and, at times, they cannot even cover the cost of processing, packaging, storing, and distributing the meat.

Hunters for the Hungry programs are great examples of community service. They serve to feed the needy and to prevent waste. Meat is a rare commodity for agencies serving the needy, and a supply of venison from the Hunters for the Hungry will typically provide the best meal these needy people have had for weeks or even months.

Most importantly, Hunters for the Hungry organizations serve as a great example of how our Nation can address issues like hunger without government intervention. These organizations receive no government money, and they operate from donations and volunteer service. We must revise the awareness of these organizations so they can solicit more monetary donations and volunteers.

As Josh Wilson, the operations director for the Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry program put it, "I know it is quite encouraging to our FHFH coordinators and to the other venison programs to know that their efforts are noticed and appreciated."

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to speak in one voice of encouragement and gratitude to these organizations for all of their community service.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate again the gentleman from Georgia and thank him for bringing forward this fine resolution. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 481.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 481, the resolution just considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.